

24 March 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR:

This is what Malcolm Bersohn said on This Is Dave Garroway Today at 7:00 A.M., WRCA-TV network: This was a film with sound of interview at Idlewild Airport:

Bersohn: "In July 1945 in Kunming, China, I worked for a time for the US Government espionage organization."

Reporter: "What date was that?"

Bersohn: "This was the beginning of my espionage activities against the Chinese people and against the cause of peace and democracy everywhere. In 1951 I collected for the military intelligence about the Chinese Peoples Volunteer Armies, and later in Peking for Harry Mills, an American spy hired by the United States Government. Because of these assignments, I was arrested in Peking for espionage on July 25, 1951. I was summoned to trial shortly after my arrest. I pleaded guilty and confessed."

Reporter: "Right away?"

Bersohn: "Right away. The trial took a number of days and I was asked in detail about my crimes to get the record straight. In addition to my testimony in court, I also wrote out a written confession."

Reporter: "Were you beaten in any way?"

Bersohn: "No. I was not beaten. Actually, it is forbidden in Chinese prisons. I came to realize that what I did was wrong so I received a lightened sentence. This is known in China as the policy of clemency. Because of this, not long after three and one-half years of manifestation of my crimes, I was sentenced to three and one-half years in prison and deported."

Reporter: "Forceful deportation?"

Bersohn: "If I were willing to lie about the Chinese Peoples' Republic, I would be paid a high price for doing so by the plotters for a new world war."

Dave Garroway: "This is Bersohn's sister, Mrs. David Elkins."

Elkins: "Is it necessary to read all this?"

Bersohn: "Hello. How are you?"

Elkins: "How are you?"

Bersohn: "I want to tell the truth. The American public has been lied to."

Elkins: "Let's get out of here."

Bersohn: "First I have to read this. Then I'll get out of here."

Elkins: "You can read this at any other time."

Bersohn: "I'll be through in ten or fifteen minutes. I'll read it fast. The New China is in the right, but it is also considered the moral duty of any of the people to say what they feel about any matter. If any of the people disapprove of the actions of any official of the Government, he may criticize as much as he wants. The Government must take action if violations of the law are exposed. Everybody is equal in the eyes of the law. If the Government official broke the law, he will go to jail just like any other law-breaker. The power in this democratic system belongs to the people, not to a selfish, small clique as in capitalist countries. The constitution of the Chinese Peoples' Republic...."

Reporter: "Say, would you...."

Bersohn: "guarantees freedom of religion."

Reporter: "Well, how about telling us...."

Elkins: "May I ask you a question?"

Reporter: "Yes."

Elkins: "This is obviously a sick boy and you are doing very much harm by going through with all this. We want to take him home and...."

Reporter: "Well, of course, we would, but he is going to talk anyway, so we might as well listen."

Bersohn: "I saw with my own eyes the Chinese Peoples' Republic is the truest democratic country and a very peace-loving country which will do everything it can to be at peace with the world."

Elkins: "Come on; come on."

Bersohn: "and here the war-mongering people in Washington and Wall Street have started preparing a war right now. I approve of the proposal of the Soviet Union to do away with the atomic bomb -- destroy all atomic weapons."

Reporter: "Have you changed your mind since you've come back to this country?"

Bersohn: "I certainly have not."

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